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NOVEMBER 2, 2006

PRESS RELEASE

The Delaware Courts took an important step toward completion of the Judiciary's COTS project this week with implementation of Phase 1 of the project. COTS – Courts Organized to Serve – is a comprehensive civil, criminal and financial case management system for all courts that will assist the courts in managing their caseloads and provide improved access to the courts by the public.

COTS is a multi-phased project. Phase 1, which officially went "live" on November 1, implements civil case management and related financial transactions in three Justice of the Peace Courts – Court 12 in New Castle County and Courts 17 and 19 in Sussex County. Phase 2, expected in the Spring of 2007, will extend civil implementation to the remaining Justice of the Peace Courts. Subsequent phases bring the new case management system to other courts and add criminal case processing and related interfaces; additional components improving functionality will come with each phase.

Most system functionality will be in place by 2009 with full implementation expected in 2010. However, this week's implementation was a significant accomplishment in that the technological infrastructure for the project is now in place and operational. "This first implementation is but one of many milestones to come," said Chief Justice Myron T. Steele. "I have no doubt that the spirit of cooperation and dedication exhibited to date will serve us well as we go forward."

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of team members from all the courts, this week's implementation went smoothly and the Justice of the Peace Court staff was able to make the transition to the new system with minimal disruption. Chief Magistrate Alan Davis complimented his court staff. "They should be congratulated for their dedicated efforts in training and their willingness to be a part of these pioneering steps in the COTS project."

The Judiciary's partner vendor in this implementation is ACS, a Fortune 500 company with more than 55,000 people supporting operations in nearly 100 countries. ACS is working with several partner vendors on the Delaware project, including IBM, Tybera and First Data Corp to provide a complete system. Delaware's system is expected to be one of the most comprehensive State court case management systems in the country.

When fully implemented, the new system will provide for web and telephone access to provide better service to court customers; e-filing will be available in all courts; document imaging will make access to case records easier; and enhanced interfaces will provide timely information to the Courts' justice partners. In addition, the courts have been working to streamline their processes and develop greater uniformity of practice

across courts. “Everyone involved has consistently placed the need to better serve the citizens of our State ahead of individual court needs,” said Chief Justice Steele.

The courts have been assisted in this effort by their partner agencies, which have provided support and expertise. The project has been funded by the Delaware General Assembly and supplemented by federal funds.

**For more information about COTS, please contact
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